

I support automatic upgrade of novice amateur license holders with as few as 5 years in class, even if their license has lapsed. I support their use of both 2 and .7 meter bands for normal usage, as well as any band or mode during FCC declared communication emergencies.

We have lost a few Minnesota Army Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS) operators due to their inability to upgrade beyond novice class. These were otherwise competent, reliable operators who were not technically inclined, or found the CW requirement difficult. Were they upgraded automatically, they would still be active. One individual who had to be eliminated from the MARS program because of his inability to upgrade was in remote upstate Minnesota where limited radio resources are located.

It seems that retaining and encouraging novice amateurs (through increased privileges) is an inexpensive method of increasing the number involved in emergency communications.

I do not support automatic upgrade of Advance class license holders. Doing so will not enhance support of emergency communications, nor enhance technical experimentation.

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